MESSAGE POINTS

- Points you can include in your letter:

Big Government

- The era of Big Government is supposed to be over, yet Washington wants to create 17 new bureaucracies and give unelected officials the power to prohibit the use of tobacco products.
- There's something wrong with the government deciding to tax a product out of the reach of adult consumers because Washington "knows what's good for you."
- It's an adult's right to buy a product fully aware of its risks, without the government telling them they can't because they don't want kids to smoke.
- Who should teach children right from wrong: Big Government or parents?

More Taxes/Money Grab

- Washington has turned a reasoned debate about tobacco into a call for new taxes.
- Washington wants to impose $500 billion in new taxes on those least able to afford them — smokers. The tax hits 47 million American adults who choose to smoke. The majority of whom are lower to middle income people.
- Under proposals being considered, the price of a pack of cigarettes would rise from about $2 per pack to $5-$6 per pack at the retail level.
- Washington **already** makes more money from taxing cigarettes than companies do from selling them.
- Washington now wants to take even more money from tobacco, increasing its take of the profits by five times.
- Huge tax increases alone won't reduce youth smoking: according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, 11 of the 13 states that raised tobacco taxes in the early 1990s saw an increase in youth smoking in the years that followed.
- 98 percent of cigarettes sold are smoked by those of legal age; only 2 percent are smoked by minors. The new tax proposals would tax 98 percent to influence 2 percent.
- Washington bureaucrats say they are concerned about crime, but the new tax proposals on cigarettes would create an enormous black market in tobacco products.
- Taxes would be used to finance tax cuts for wealthy Americans and pay for new federal programs.
- More than half the taxes on cigarettes will be paid by people making less than $30,000 per year.
- The average smoker will pay $1,700 per year in cigarettes taxes.

Jobs

- The new tax legislation on tobacco pending in Congress would affect nearly 2 million jobs. The livelihoods of 1.8 million Americans across the country are tied to tobacco — everyone from growers and manufacturers to industry suppliers, truckers and retail store clerks.

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/hzcy0000

TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR LETTER TO THE EDITOR

- **Type your letter if possible. If not, hand-write it as clearly and neatly as possible.**
- **Below, see the addresses of the newspapers to write.**
- **Include your home address and daytime telephone number.**
- **Inside address - address your letter to:**
  Letters to the Editor
  Name of Newspaper
  Address

  Dear Editor:
- **Open your letter by clearly stating your position and stick to one topic.**
- **State your supporting points briefly. Then restate your main point in closing.**
- **Keep the letter to about 250 words. Write the way you speak — in plain English, and stick to the facts.**
- **Sign your letter.**
- **Add a "P.S." asking that your letter be published.**
- **If you haven't heard from the newspaper within a week, call the editorial-page editor and ask when you can expect to see your letter printed.**
- **If you work in field sales, please write your local newspaper(s) as well the address(es) below.**

Richard Fulgham
Reporter
Lebanon News
308 Clinch Mountain Road
Lebanon, VA 24266-4200

Carolyn Rumell
Managing Editor
People's Weekly World
235 W. 23rd St.
New York, NY 10011-2313

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